

Amendments to the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A container for packaging perishable food items comprising: a tubular body portion formed of molded thermoplastic polymer having an arcuate top, two ends, and a flat bottom having an undulating profile at each side forming a trough, said tubular body portion having a cross-section suitable for holding a perishable food item, wherein at least a portion of said tubular body is ~~substantially~~ transparent;

one end of said body portion being closed and the other end of said body portion having an open mouth; and

said open mouth is adapted to be sealed.

2. – 5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) The container according to Claim 1 further comprising ~~wherein said seal~~ is a heat sealable film for sealing said open mouth.

7. (Currently amended) The container according to Claim 1 further comprising ~~wherein said seal~~ is an endcap for sealing said open mouth.

8. (Original) The container according to Claim 7 wherein said endcap is attached to the body of the container by friction-fit or a tack-weld.

9. (Original) The container according to Claim 7 wherein said endcap is attached to the body of the container by screw threads

10. (Original) The container according to Claim 1 wherein indicia is affixed to said container.

11. (Original) The container according to Claim 1 wherein said at least a portion of said tubular body is opaque.

12. (Original) The container according to Claim 1 further comprising a lip projecting radially from the periphery of said mouth opening.

13. (Original) The container according to Claim 1 wherein the interior of said tubular body portion is coated with an anti-fogging agent.

14. (Currently amended) The container according to Claim 1 wherein an the atmosphere of said container is manipulated to increase the oxygen content thereof optimize storing conditions.

15. – 19. (Canceled)

20. (New) The container according to Claim 14 wherein said atmosphere is selected from oxygen, carbon dioxide, nitrogen, carbon monoxide, and blends of the foregoing gases.

21. (New) The container according to Claim 1 wherein the perishable food item is disposed in the container, the perishable food item comprising fresh red meat.

22. (New) The container according to Claim 21 wherein said meat is disposed on said flat bottom of the container such that a capacity of the container is only partially filled with said meat so that said meat is recessed from said arcuate top.

23. (New) The container according to Claim 21 wherein a volume of said meat is between 50% and 75% of the capacity of the container.

24. (New) The container according to Claim 21 wherein said meat is disposed on said flat bottom of the container in spaced apart relation to said arcuate top.

25. (New) The container according to Claim 1 wherein the perishable food item is disposed in the container, the perishable food item comprising fresh red meat, and wherein a heat sealable film seals said open mouth.

26. (New) The container according to Claim 1 wherein the tubular body portion defines outwardly sloping sides.

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27. (New) The container according to Claim 1 wherein an interior of said tubular body portion is coated with an anti-fogging agent.